

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Status

Claims 1, 3, 6, 8-11 and 13-18 are pending in this application and have been rejected. Claims 2, 4, 5, 7 and 12 were previously canceled. Claim 17 is herein canceled. Claims 1, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 16 and 18 are herein amended. New claim 19 is added. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 8-11, 16 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

More specifically, claims 8-11 have been indicated by the Examiner as depending directly or indirectly from a canceled claim. Claims 8 and 10 have been amended to depend from pending claim 6.

With regard to claims 16 and 18, they have been indicated by the Examiner as containing limitations having insufficient antecedent basis. Claims 16 and 18 have been amended to provide sufficient antecedent basis for their respective limitations.

Reconsideration of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 6, 8-11 and 13-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over PCT WO 01/61430 A1 (Viehmann) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,378,936 (Kokubo). Claims 1, 3, 6, 8-11 and 13-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C.

§ 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,838,188 (Taguchi) in view of Kokubo.

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 17 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have essentially incorporated the features of claim 17 into independent claims 1, 6 and 16 to place independent claims 1, 6 and 16 and the claims which depend therefrom in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claims 13 and 15 to bring them into conformity with amended claim 6 from which they depend.

New Claim 19

New claim 19 has been added to further clarify the active resistance part of claim 1. As claim 19 depends from claim 1, it is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons.

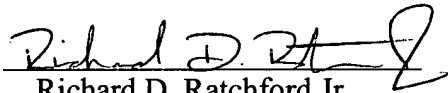
Dependent Claims

Applicants have not independently addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that, in view of the amendments to the claims presented herein and, for at least similar reasons as why the independent claims from which the dependent claims depend are believed allowable as discussed, supra, the dependent claims are also allowable. Applicants however, reserve the right to address any individual rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary or appropriate.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims as herein presented are allowable over the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, and that the respective rejections be withdrawn. Applicants further submit that the application is hereby placed in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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